



City of Johannesburg
Johannesburg Roads Agency

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2017

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Media Release

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For Immediate Release

Structural Repairs on Robinson Canal Nears Completion

Robinson Canal, one of City of Johannesburg's oldest canals, has undergone an R8 million upgrade as part of the city-wide repair and rehabilitation of stormwater drainage systems. The **Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)** embarked on the structural rehabilitation of the 2.65km canal during the 2016/2017 financial year, in efforts to minimize urban and residential flooding.

Stormwater management is essential in ensuring the minimisation of urban and residential flooding. The impact of climate change has been evident with an increase in flash flooding in urban areas after sporadic torrential downpours since 2009 with most recent in late 2016 and early 2017. This has resulted in increased water volumes and a negative impact on the aging stormwater infrastructure across the City.

The repairs to Robinson Canal were prioritised due to the increased risk of water contamination from grey water and industrial waste water that contains high toxicity levels which are harmful to humans and the environment. When waste water containing high levels of chemicals is not properly managed, it not only has a destructive effect on the walls of the canal but also releases harmful gases into the atmosphere, endangering the local habitat with increased carbon emissions.

The project has been divided into three phases: Phase 1 of the structural improvements is 65% complete and is expected to reach completion at the end of June 2017.

Transport Member of Mayoral Committee, Councillor Nonhlanhla Makhuba said: "A systematic approach was adopted in carrying out repairs and rehabilitation of Robinson Canal. Phase 1 which is estimated at R8 million focuses on repairs and rehabilitation of the open channel which services Region F, city and suburban. It extends from Main Street passing through Selby and Ophirton and ends on Lake Street. Repairs have been undertaken on the canal linings, rehabilitation of sinkholes, sludge and vegetation removal and gabion works. Multiple defects were reported as part of initial site inspection, which required the scope of work to be divided into three phases. Phase 2 of the structural repairs has been scheduled for the 2017/2018 financial year with capital expenditure budget of approximately R5 million. This phase will focus on the six-month repair of the underground channel which will require a high level of safety due to the nature of trapped gases from the waste water in the lower lying structure. JRA is in the process of appointing contractors for this phase."

Chairman: S Tshabalala,
Executive Directors: S Phillips - Managing Director, G Mbatha - Chief Financial Officer
Non-Executive Directors: L Mashamaite, Q Buthelezi, S Thunzi, P Govender, M Tshetshe, T Magerman, K Sihlali, A Torres
Company Secretary: K Mills

Registration No. 2000/028993/07

She said contractors are nearing completion on Phase 1 of the project. “A number of trees that severely damaged the canal lining were removed. Three major sinkholes exceeding 2m in length and two minor sinkholes were repaired. Missing sewer manhole covers were also replaced. Deteriorated linings and eroded concrete floors have been reconstructed. Desiltation and removal of debris has been undertaken and gabions have been installed to prevent further soil erosion”, said Makhuba.

As part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), 40 local labourers were employed for the duration of the project. Four emerging sub-contractors from the local community were hired, with the main contractor being female-owned.

Makhuba said: “As we celebrate Environment Month, this June, across South Africa, it is important for us to understand the impact of waste water and greenhouse gases on the environment. The importance of systemic adaptation to climate change must be emphasised in ensuring the preparedness of the city’s infrastructure towards safe, resilient and sustainable human settlements. The City of Johannesburg’s five pillars of administration aligns to the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals. As a city, we are implementing mitigation measures in our infrastructure projects to combat climate change and its impacts. The structural rehabilitation of Robinson Canal ensures sustainable management of stormwater with risk mitigation measures in place to reduce impact and harm to biodiversity and the surrounding community. As a city we are focused on building and preserving our stormwater infrastructure and ensuring sustainable industrialisation through education and transformation processes that aligns to lower carbon emissions, safe disposal of grey water and industrial waste water.”

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About the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)

The JRA is a City-owned agency responsible for the maintenance, repair and development of Johannesburg’s road network and storm water infrastructure, including bridges and culverts, traffic lights and signage. The organisation is committed to providing quality roads that are accessible, safe and liveable for our communities.